

[Rollcall Vote No. 375 Ex.]

YEAS—68

Baldwin	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Burr	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	Kelly	Schumer
Capito	King	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lee	Smith
Collins	Luján	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Toomey
Cotton	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock
Ernst	Murphy	Warren
Fischer	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Wyden
Graham	Padilla	Young
Grassley	Peters	

NAYS—30

Barrasso	Hagerty	Paul
Blackburn	Hawley	Risch
Blunt	Hoeben	Rubio
Boozman	Inhofe	Sasse
Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker

NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein Rounds

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 244, Sarah Bianchi, of Virginia, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative (Asia, Africa, Investment, Services, Textiles, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the rank of Ambassador.

Charles E. Schumer, Mazie Hirono, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Martin Heinrich, Michael F. Bennet, Jacky Rosen, Richard Blumenthal, Alex Padilla, John Hickenlooper, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tina Smith, Tim Kaine, Ben Ray Lujan, Chris Van Hollen, Jeff Merkley.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Sarah Bianchi, of Virginia, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative (Asia, Africa, Investment, Services, Textiles, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the rank of Ambassador, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 85, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 376 Ex.]

YEAS—85

Baldwin	Hagerty	Portman
Barrasso	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Risch
Blackburn	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Blunt	Hoeben	Sanders
Booker	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Brown	Inhofe	Schatz
Burr	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Capito	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Cassidy	Lee	Sullivan
Collins	Lujan	Tester
Coons	Lummis	Thune
Cornyn	Manchin	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Markey	Toomey
Cramer	Marshall	Van Hollen
Crapo	Menendez	Warner
Daines	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Moran	Warren
Durbin	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Young
Graham	Padilla	
Grassley	Peters	

NAYS—13

Boozman	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Braun	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	McConnell	Tuberville
Cruz	Paul	
Hawley	Rubio	

NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein Rounds

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN). On this vote, the yeas are 85, the nays are 13.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Sarah Bianchi, of Virginia, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative (Asia, Africa, Investment, Services, Textiles, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the rank of Ambassador.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

CANADIAN BORDER

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, early this week, the administration extended its border closure with Canada for another month. Another month that vaccinated Americans can travel into Canada, but vaccinated Canadians cannot cross our border; dealing another monthlong blow to American businesses all across our northern border.

Now, I am glad to see the Biden administration taking the pandemic seriously and delivering much-needed relief in a lot of different ways, but I am not going to stay quiet about this serious, completely unnecessary harm this

border-crossing closure is causing to small businesses and workers in Point Roberts, WA.

Now, as I have said to everybody who will listen, and some who, I am sure, are tired of hearing me, Point Roberts must at least have an exemption as we work to safely reopen the U.S.-Canadian border.

And here is why. For those of you not familiar with this particular part of Washington State, Point Roberts is right here. It is called an exclave community. People who live in Point Roberts, in order to get to the rest of our State, have to travel through Canada and back down to Washington State. If Canadians cannot come across the border, Point Roberts is really isolated. That is what is happening right now.

Now, let's paint a picture. You can take a boat right now from Canada to Point Roberts. You can fly across the border from Vancouver down to Seattle. But right now, because this border is closed, a Canadian family who lives within here can't go to Point Roberts for lunch, and they are sitting right here. This is this Canadian border, and this is Point Roberts.

Now, Point Roberts has some small businesses, and its entire economy cannot survive without that easy border cross for folks who live within this region. They can't count on people from down here to come up to their restaurants or to their businesses.

Their local economy depends on Canadian tourists, especially since, by the way, the only ferry between Point Roberts and the rest of Washington State is closed because of the pandemic. So people can't get up there right now. The only people who can help that community survive have to come across this border, and they can't because it is closed.

Now, this has been going on for 17 months and counting, and I have heard from so many small business owners there, including the owner of the only grocery store in town who is now on the brink of shutting down his doors for good—the only grocery store here for the people who live there and for the people close by.

Now, I really appreciate the administration's science-based approach to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have to follow science, and we need to follow the evidence, and I am proud we have taken COVID-19 extremely serious from the very start in my home State of Washington. But I firmly believe the evidence supports at least a narrow and tailored exception to the Canadian border closure to allow for a reopening right here for this community, Point Roberts. It is their port of entry for Canadian travel, and it needs to be open if we want those people to survive.

I have yet to be presented with a compelling reason why a border exemption for this small little community has not yet been provided.

I have spoken directly with DHS Secretary Mayorkas about this. I have talked with Jeff Zients, the White

House Coronavirus Response Coordinator, and a lot of other top officials at the State Department and White House as well. No one—not a person—can explain to me what evidence is being used to support that border restriction right there for Point Roberts.

So I am here on the Senate floor today to make sure that President Biden and his administration understand me. At the very least, we just need an emergency exemption from these restrictions for this small little Point Roberts community right here so that they can get their economy back up and running and that people there have the services that they need.

I am going to continue to press the administration on this and do whatever I can to help this community. But I want this on the record: Maintaining this ban on cross-border travel for Point Roberts is absolutely unacceptable. It should have been addressed months ago, and I will not stop until this is resolved.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of [S. 2384] are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I am here to talk today about a subject of urgency for our Nation but a subject that many Democrats in this body don't want to talk about. I mean Afghanistan.

Thirteen American soldiers, dead; 169 civilians, dead; hundreds more American civilians left behind to the enemy; billions of dollars in military equipment abandoned to the enemy, like you see in the images right over my shoulder. Yet, nearly a month after this disastrous evacuation, the worst foreign policy disaster in this Nation's history since Vietnam, there has been no accountability. No one has been fired. No one has resigned. No one has been relieved of command.

Instead, what we have heard is the most incredible and, frankly, insulting parade of excuses and evasions from the President of the United States and the rest of his leadership team. They have said the evacuation debacle was an "extraordinary success." That is a quote. That is from the mouth of the President himself. Let that just sink in for a second.

Thirteen American soldiers, including from my State of Missouri, lost—

13—169 civilians dead; hundreds of Americans left behind enemy lines to fend for themselves, left to the Taliban, left to ISIS. Has an American President ever—ever—left behind American civilians on the field of battle—hundreds of them—and then called it an extraordinary success? I can't think of a time in American history.

It was a disgrace, what the President said. It was untrue, what the President said. Yet he goes on and on and on. And now President Biden and his team say they didn't leave any Americans behind. They said, in fact, Americans weren't abandoned to the enemy.

I mean, this is simply insultingly false. By their own estimates, hundreds of American civilians were left behind and are still there. Americans are still trapped in Afghanistan, trying to get out, trying to be rescued, left to their own devices. Yet the President of the United States insists that it never happened; it was all a success; all is well.

The President said it had to be this way. Those soldiers—what?—had to die? I mean, what does that even mean—that the military had to abandon billions of dollars of equipment to the enemy; that civilians, hundreds of them, had to die; all those Americans had to be left behind? I mean, is he serious about that? Does anyone honestly believe that? Does anyone honestly believe that this was the only possible outcome, that the death of American soldiers and the loss of civilians was the only possible outcome, the only way to withdraw?

It is absurd, and an honest leader would acknowledge it. In fact, an honest leader would never have said it. Yet President Biden and his team continue to say it day after day.

Joe Biden has blamed other people. He has pointed the finger at the people of Afghanistan. That is remarkable. These people now suffering under the rule of the Taliban—they are at fault, apparently. He has blamed and his administration has blamed the intelligence Agencies. They cast aspersions at the commanders on the ground. And remarkably—remarkably—many Democrats in Congress seem to be fine to go along with all of this, with these excuses and these evasions, this attempt to whitewash what has happened in Afghanistan and is happening as we speak, as Americans remain behind enemy lines.

The Democrat leader has stood on this floor and praised Joe Biden's handling of this crisis, applauded it. Just yesterday, he said right here on the floor that my efforts to get accountability for this crisis in Afghanistan were a waste of the Senate's time. Those were his words: waste of the Senate's time. He also said it is something that only the far right is interested in. His words: "the far right." What an insult to the American people.

All I can say to that is: Why don't you come to Missouri? Why don't you talk to the families of soldiers who are serving? Why don't you talk to the

families of those who have served in this 20-year war? Why don't you talk to veterans? Why don't you look the people in the face who are grieving and who are demoralized and who are shocked at what happened over the last few months in Afghanistan, shocked at the abandonment of American civilians? For that matter, why don't you just talk to this administration's own officials who rushed to tell reporters, off the record, that they were horrified that the President had left behind American civilians—horrified.

To brush all of that aside, to pretend that none of that really matters—that is all a distraction; there is nothing to see here—that is insulting, and it is wrong.

Until there is accountability, I will force the Senate to actually vote on Joe Biden's nominees for leadership positions in the State Department and the Department of Defense. In the face of this crisis, in the face of this debacle, the least the Senate can do is vote.

But the Senate ought to be doing a lot more than that. While grieving families are still waiting for answers, while Americans are still left behind enemy lines, we should be getting the truth. That ought to be our focus. We should be demanding accountability, not sweeping it under the rug.

So let me just pose a few—a few—of the questions that I think need answering: Why was the administration so unprepared for what transpired during its evacuation? Why didn't it plan for the potential fall of Kabul, for the potential surge of the Taliban, for the potential collapse of the Afghan Security Forces? Why weren't they prepared to withdraw while keeping Americans safe?

Joe Biden and his team didn't coordinate the drawdown so American citizens could leave the country; they ignored them. They told us the Afghan Security Forces were 300,000 strong; they were never that large. They promised the security forces were well trained; they weren't.

Has no one bothered to read the reports of the inspector general for Afghanistan? I commend them to you. They are harrowing. It is harrowing reading. The inspector general has been warning for literally years that the Afghan Security Forces were unprepared and unreliable. He has warned that our own Defense Department has, for years, concealed the true state of the Afghan Security Forces and their inability to carry out their mission. These aren't secrets. These are reports, many of them published in the Nation's leading newspapers.

Yet the administration didn't factor them into their planning, didn't seem aware of the facts on the ground, didn't seem able to prepare to deal with the realities, even as Americans were put into harm's way. It really does make you wonder: What was the Biden administration actually focused on? I mean, what was it doing with its time? What was the President doing with his